

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02

INR-07 IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04

PRS-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00

DODE-00 NSC-05 ERDE-00 DRC-01 /090 W

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1205

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INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0441

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: TIMING OF PRESENTATION OF OPTION 3 TO EAST

1. IN RECENT CONVERSATION HERE ASSISTANT NATO SYG KILLHAM WHO PRESIDES OVER SPC CONSIDERATION OF OPTION 3, INDICATED THAT SPC MIGHT TAKE AS MUCH AS SIX MORE WEEKS TO COMPLETE DRAFTING THE GUIDANCE PAPERS ON OPTION 3 AT THE PRESENT RATE OF SPEED. UNLESS EFFORTS ARE MADE TO SPEED SPC PROCESS, IT MAY TAKE EVEN LONGER THAN KILLHAM ESTIMATES TO CONCLUDE DRAFTING. WE BELIEVEEAT SOME AT LEAST INFORMAL SUGGESTION FROM THE US OF A SPECIFIC TARGET DATE FOR CONCLUSION OF THE SPEC WORK ON THE NATO PAPERS IS NOW DESIRABLE AND WILL BE NECESSARY BEFORE SPC DRAFTING CAN BE COMPLETED. WE PROPOSE THAT THE US SUGGEST SUCH A TARGET DATE TO NATO AND THAT IT BE OCTOBER 24.

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2. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES, THE SOONER THE WEST PUTS FORWARD OPTION L3, THE BETTER: (A) THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE DRAGGING BADLY AND NEED NEW IMPETUS; (B) OWING TO NUMEROUS LEAKS IN THE WESTERN PRESS, EASTERN NEGOTIATORS NOW EXPECT THIS MOVE; PROTRACTED DELAY WOULD CREATE STRAIN AND FRICTION BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN NEGOTIATORS AND RISK LOSS OF THE GOOD WORKING ATMOSPHERE WHICH IS OUR MAIN ASSET FROM TWO YEARS OF NEGOTIATION, TO APPLY TO THE NEGOTIATION OF DIFFICULT DETAILS; (C) THE WEST SHOULD NOT WAIT TOO LONG AFTER THE CSCE SUMMIT TO FOLLOW UP US STATEMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CSCE SUMMIT THAT THE US EXPECTS PROGRESS IN MBFR AND CONTEMPLATES MAKING AN IMPORTANT MOVE; (D) SIMILARLY, THE WEST SHOULD NOT DELAY IN PRESSING THE SOVIETS TO MAKE GOOD ON BREZHNEV'S STATEMENT THAT FOLLOWING CSCE, THEY WOULD NOW GIVE PRIORITY TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS; (E) IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO BE IN A POSITION TO TELL THE CONGRESS BY NEXT MAY AT LEAST THAT ROUGH AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON MAJOR ISSUES HAS BEEN ACHIEVED; (F) IT IS DESIRABLE TO GET SOME AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE BEFORE THE GERMAN AND US ELECTION CAMPAIGNS GET UNDER WAY; (G) IN RECENT MONTHS, THE SOVIETS HAVE HAD ALL THE INITIATIVE; THE WEST NEEDS AN INITIATIVE OF ITS OWN TO BRING BACK THE WESTERN PROGRAM AS THE BASIS OF NEGOTIATION; (H) PROTRACTION OF THE NATO CONSULTATION PROCESS ON OPTION 3 ENTAILS CONSIDERABLE RISK THAT ONE OR THE OTHER NATO COUNTRY WILL RE-OPEN ISSUES ON WHICH DIFFICULT COMPROMISES HAVE BEEN REACHED; (I) THE WEST SHOULD PUT DOWN OPTION 3 IN TIME FOR IT TO RECEIVE A BOOST FROM THE US-SOVIET SUMMIT IN DECEMBER.

3. IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO RECEIVE A CONSIDERED EASTERN RESPONSE TO OPTION 3 BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS RECESS OF THE VIENNA TALKS, WHICH WILL PROBABLY BE IN MID-DECEMBER. AS SET FORTH BELOW, THIS WOULD MEAN PRESENTING OPTION 3 AT THE BEGINNING OF NOVEMBER. PUTTING OFF PRESENTATION UNTIL LATER WOULD PROBABLY MEAN THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT HAVE TO MAKE AN INITIAL CONSIDERED RESPONSE UNTIL LATE JANUARY OR FEBRUARY. IN VIEW OF THE COMPLEXITIES AND NUMBER OF OPEN ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS

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THEMSELVES, AS WELL AS SUCH FACTORS AS THE GERMAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN, WHICH COULD FREEZE WORK ON ISSUES ESPECIALLY CONTROVERSIAL FOR THE FRG, THIS TIMING COULD JEOPARDIZE CHANCES OF REACHING AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON MAJOR ISSUES IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1976 EVEN IF THE SOVIETS RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO OPTION 3.

4. WE CALCULATE THAT THE AD HOC GROUP MAY NEED A WEEK OF

PREPARATION AFTER IT RECEIVES THE GO-AHEAD FROM THE COUNCIL BEFORE IT MAKES ITS PRESENTATION TO THE EAST. THIS WILL PROBABLY BE FOLLOWED BY TWO WEEKS OF INFORMAL SESSIONS WHERE THE EAST ASKS QUESTIONS ABOUT OPTION 3. FOLLOWING THIS PERIOD, THE EAST WILL PROBABLY CLAIM THE RIGHT OF A PERIOD FOR REFLECTION BY EASTERN GOVERNMENTS BEFORE GIVING A CONSIDERED RESPONSE. FOUR WEEKS WOULD BE A REASONABLE PERIOD FOR SUCH CONSIDERATION. THUS, TO OBTAIN AN INITIAL CONSIDERED EASTERN RESPONSE TO OPTION 3 BY MID-DECEMBER, THE WEST WOULD HAVE TO PUT FORWARD AN OPTION 3 PROPOSAL TO THE EAST NO LATER THAN THE FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER. HOWEVER, A DECISION ON TIMING OF PRESENTATION TO THE EAST IS A SEPARATE AND DIFFERENT ISSUE FROM ESTABLISHING A TARGET DATE FOR CONCLUSION OF SPC DRAFTING. THE MOVE WE NEED NOW IS THE LATTER.

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